

MINUTES OF THE
MARICOPA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS
STREET COMMITTEE

Tuesday, March 9, 2004
MAG Offices, Saguaro Conference Room
302 North First Avenue, Suite 200
Phoenix, Arizona 85003

MEMBERS ATTENDING

Don Herp, Phoenix, Chairman	*Horatio Skeet, Litchfield Park
Andrew Smith, ADOT	Ed Fritz for Chris Plumb, Maricopa County
Carnell Thurman for Mike Smith, Avondale	Kevin Wallace, Mesa
Carroll Reynolds, Buckeye	Andrew Cooper, Paradise Valley
Mike Normand for Dan Cook, Chandler	*Burton Charron, Peoria
Richard Stuart, Gila Bend	*Bob Ronzo, Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian
Michael Vinson, Gila River Indian Community	Community
Bruce Ward, Gilbert	Robert Brown, Scottsdale
Dan Sherwood, Glendale	*Brian Pirooz, Surprise
*Charles Hydeman, Goodyear	Larry Shobe, Tempe
Jim Ricker, Guadalupe	*Ralph Velez, Tolleson
	*Jesse Mendez, Youngtown

*Members neither present nor represented by Proxy

OTHERS PRESENT

Stephen Tate, MAG

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Don Herp at 1:30 p.m.

2. Approval of the January 13, 2004, Meeting Minutes

The minutes were unanimously approved.

3. Call to the Audience and Stakeholders

There were no requests to speak to the Committee during this part of the agenda.

4. Transportation Programming Manager's Report

Paul Ward briefed the Committee on the status of the re-authorization of the federal surface transportation act. He noted that the Senate had passed a bill to re-authorize the Act and that the House was working on a companion bill, but that both bills exceeded the amounts suggested by the President and that action to re-authorize the Act could be deferred until after the November election. In the intervening time, an interim act would presumably be passed to allow federal funds to continue to flow.

Estimates of future federal funding available for the draft FY 2006-2010 MAG Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) are not available due to uncertainty concerning re-authorization. However, it is anticipated that MAG member agencies will be able to request federal Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) and MAG Surface Transportation Program funds for FY 2008, FY 2009 and FY 2010. Depending on the amount of funds available, it is likely that the currently programmed years, FYs 2006 and 2007 may need to “filled out.” It is anticipated that new project funding requests for the FY 2006-2010 MAG TIP will be due in September. This development process for the 06-10 MAG TIP schedule is expected to follow the normal development cycle for such programs.

Robert Brown asked if the new Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) directed new CMAQ funding to non roadway projects. Mr. Ward indicated that policies for the RTP were under development and that he was not clear as to the exact impact of the RTP on the availability of CMAQ for roadway projects. He did note that the RTP set aside federal funds for bicycle, pedestrian and intelligent transportation systems (ITS) projects.

Mr. Ward also noted that MAG had begun the development of a FY 2005-2009 TIP but had abandoned the effort due to uncertainty over the extension of the half-cent countywide sales tax. Extension of this tax will be voted on in November. As federal statutes require that the first two years of a TIP include only legally authorized funding sources and also require that all regionally significant projects be included in the TIP, it is not feasible to develop a TIP until after the results of the November election are known.

5. MAG Federally Funded Locally Sponsored Projects Development Status

Stephen Tate began by distributing two reports: one on the status of FY 2004 and FY 2005 MAG Federally funded projects and a second report on projects for which a request for deferral had been received. He requested that members review the two reports and provide him with updates or corrections after the meeting.

He then briefly discussed the time line for obligating FY 2004 projects. He noted that requests to accelerate projects would be considered **starting in April 2004**; that the last opportunity to reprogram projects would be at the Regional Council meeting **on July 28, 2004**; and that 95 percent plans and all final documents necessary to obtain environmental, right-of-way and utilities clearances should be submitted to ADOT **by August 2, 2004**. He concluded by noting that the Federal Highway Administration normally would not consider applications to obligate projects after the second week in September as the agency needed time to close out the federal fiscal year.

Mr. Tate went on to note that the design process for all FY 2005 federally funded projects should be underway and that the entire design and environmental approval process was averaging twenty-one months statewide. He added that the environmental process for most projects would take eight to twelve months and that if an agency had not begun this process, they were likely to have difficulty in obligating their project in FY 2005.

Kevin Wallace requested that a presentation on the ADOT review process be provided to the Committee. The Chairman concurred, noting that it would provide an opportunity for the Committee to identify areas where member agencies could improve their ability to navigate through the process.

6. Policy on Advanced Design for Potential Federally Funded Projects

Mr. Ward indicated that some MAG member agencies had requested that the ADOT Local Governments Section review and clear some locally funded projects. These reviews and clearances would allow the projects to be quickly obligated with federal funds should federal funding become available for their use.

The key issues with regard to this practice include:

- a. the willingness and ability of ADOT to comply with requests, the costs to be charged to agencies;
- b. the priority of the requested reviews in the ADOT workflow; and
- c. the level of involvement of MAG.

The Chairman suggested that the policy be discussed in more detail at the next Committee meeting.

7. Potential Addition to Federal Application Forms

Mr. Ward distributed to each member with MAG federally funded FY 2006 and FY 2007 construction projects a sheet identifying the projects and a listing for locally funded design phases for the projects. He indicated that, contingent upon their approval, he would process TIP amendments to include the identified design phases in the TIP. He noted that as all federally funded construction projects required a design phase to be completed prior to their obligation, the inclusion of the a design phase in the TIP was simply making apparent what was already occurring in practice.

Mr. Tate then distributed a sample federal funding application for the draft FY 2006-2010 MAG TIP. He noted that the future application would include a request for information necessary to program a design phase of the project, but that this information would not be used to select projects for federal funding and would only be applicable once a project had been selected for federal funding.

Michael Vinson asked about the review process for programming and obligating MAG federally funded projects. Mr. Ward indicated that the review process for programming projects was substantially different and that the process involved substantially less project detail and substantially more multi-agency involvement. The review process used to obligate projects is handled through the ADOT Local Governments Section and results in project design, estimates and specifications package and includes clearances for right-of-way, utilities and environmental aspects of the project.

8. HPMS and Public Mileage Requests

Mr. Tate noted that he was working on an estimate of local street mileage in the MAG area and that tomorrow he would be sending out a memo requesting member agencies to provide him with an estimate of the total roadway miles they owned. He concluded by noting that the estimate was being developed to comply with federal data reporting requirements and that the data would be used in federal funding formulas.

9. Federal Functional Classification Request and #10 Request to Reprogram Gila Bend Watermelon Road Project

Agenda items 9 and 10 were combined at the meeting.

Mr. Tate briefly discussed the two requests. Directing the Committee's attention to "Attachment One" in the meeting packet, he noted that the Town of Gila Bend was requesting to classify Martin Avenue from Old North Main Street to Stout Street as an urban collector, that this section of roadway provided access to neighborhoods and several schools along its alignment and that recent traffic counts indicated that the section averaged over a thousand vehicles daily. He concluded by noting that the approval of MAG for the application was necessary for ADOT to recommend to the FHWA to classify it as an urban collector. In order to use MAG Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds on the facility it would need to be classified as an urban collector or above.

Mr. Tate then briefly discussed the reprogramming request. He noted that the Town was requesting to transfer \$188,600 in MAG STP that was programmed for intersection improvements at Watermelon Road and Old US 80 in FY 2005 to a pedestrian facilities improvement project on Martin Street between Old North Main Street and Richards Street. The intersection improvement project would be deleted from the TIP.

It was noted that when the intersection improvement project was programmed that it was anticipated that power plant development in the area would result in a large number of heavy truck movements at the intersection. The anticipated increase in truck traffic has not occurred and as Martin Street serves several schools and a park, it has relatively high pedestrian traffic and could benefit from pedestrian facilities improvements. The approval of the programming request would be contingent on the reclassification of the facility as an urban collector.

The Chairman asked Richard Stuart several questions concerning the proposed pedestrian project. Mr. Stuart noted that preliminary plans had already been developed for the project and that the project would include sidewalks and lighting.

Larry Shobe moved that Gila Bend classification request be approved. Mike Normand seconded the request and the motion carried unanimously. Dan Sherwood then moved that the Gila Bend reprogramming request be approved. Kevin Wallace seconded the request and the motion carried unanimously.

10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:59 p.m.